

Old Age, Disability, Death

First law: 1910.

Current laws: 1945, 1967, 1971, 1975, 1980, 1982, 1988, 1993, 1994 and 1995.

Type of program: Social insurance system; also mandatory supplementary pension systems.

Exchange rate: U.S.\$1.00 equals 5.16 francs.

One euro equals 6.56 francs.

Coverage

Employed persons.

Special systems for agricultural, mining, railroad, public utility, and public employees; seamen; nonagricultural self-employed; and agricultural self-employed.

Voluntary affiliation for nonworking head of household (old-age pension only), nonemployed persons caring for disabled family member and those employed abroad.

Compulsory old-age pension affiliation for women receiving certain family benefits (see Family Allowances, below) and those caring for a disabled person.

Source of Funds

Insured person: 6.55% of pensionable earnings plus 0.1% of total earnings for surviving spouse's allowance.

Employer: 8.2% of covered earnings plus 1.6% of total payroll.

Government: Variable subsidies.

Maximum earnings for contribution and benefit purposes: 14,470 francs a month.

Disability and survivor benefits financed under sickness and maternity program (see below).

Qualifying Conditions

Old-age pension: Age 60 and 1 quarter of coverage. Benefits are payable abroad.

Disability pension: Under age 60. Loss of at least 2/3 of earning capacity, in any occupation. Entry into insurance 12 months before incapacity and 800 hours of employment in last 12 months, including 200 hours in last 3 months.

Survivor pension: Aged at least 55 and married for 2 years unless there is a child from the marriage. Personal income less than 83,658 francs per year.

Surviving spouse's allowance: Aged less than 55 and has or has had a dependent child. Personal income less than 11,790 francs per quarter.

Old-Age Benefits

Old-age pension: Depending on age or duration of insurance coverage, 25 to 50% of average salary for the best 25 years (adjusted since 1947) as of January 1, 2008, (between January 1, 1994 and December 31, 2007, the number of years taken into account will vary between 11 and 24 years depending on the year of birth). 50% of adjusted average salary if 160 quarters of coverage in any scheme as of January 1, 2003 (between January 1, 1994 and December 31, 2002, the number of quarters required will vary between 151 and 159 according to year of birth), or if disabled, aged 65, working mother or war veteran.

Full pension if 150 quarters in general scheme only, otherwise reduced according to number of quarters.

Pension only payable where employment in previous occupation ceased definitely. Possibility of taking up other employment.

Minimum pension: Pension calculated on basis of 50% rate cannot be less than 39,416.05 francs per year with 150 quarters of coverage in general scheme. Otherwise, minimum reduced depending on length of coverage.

Maximum: 50% of maximum earnings for contribution purposes (86,820 francs).

Constant attendance allowance: 68,712.21 francs per year.

Spouse's supplement (income-tested): 4,000 francs a year at age 65 (aged 60-64 if disabled) if insured had 150 quarters of coverage; otherwise, proportionately reduced.

Child's supplement: 10% of pension if insured reared 3 children.

Old-age allowance: To increase pensions up to a minimum amount of 17,545 francs per year for low-income pensioners who are 65 years old (60 if disabled) and if single, earn not more than 43,512 francs a year (76,215 francs a year per couple).

Old-age supplement : 24,940 francs a year to the same low income pensioners and under the same conditions plus nationality and residency if single (41,125 francs for married couple).

Means-tested allowance: 17,545 francs a year to low-income aged persons ineligible for pension.

Constant attendance allowance: 68,712.21 francs a year.

Adjustment: Adjustment of pensions for changes in cost of living.

Permanent Disability Benefits

Disability pension: 50% of average earnings in highest paid 10 years if incapable of any professional activity, up to a maximum of 86,820 francs a year.

Constant-attendance supplement: Maximum: 68,712.21 francs per year.

Partial disability: 30% of average earnings in highest paid 10 years up to a maximum of 52,092 francs per year. Minimum pension: 17,545 francs a year.

Adjustment: Adjustment of pensions for changes in cost of living.

Survivor Benefits

Survivor pension: 54% of insured's pension. Payable to widow, divorced wife, or widower; must not have remarried. Pension proportionately divided if more than 1 qualified surviving spouse. Minimum pension: 17,545 francs a year if insured had 60 trimesters of coverage. If less, minimum reduced proportionally.

Old-age pension payable to disabled widow or widower age 55 whose spouse was also disabled, regardless of income or length of marriage.

Child's supplement: 10% if surviving spouse gave birth to or raised 3 children.

Child-care supplement: 6,032.88 francs per year.

Adjustment: Adjustment of pensions for changes in cost of living.

Surviving spouse's allowance (income-tested): Payable up to 3 years following death of insured. Amount equals 3,744 francs a month during 1st year, 2,065 francs during 2nd year, and 1,573 francs during 3rd year. If beneficiary is at least age 50, payment is extended until age 55 at 3rd year rate.

Administrative Organization

Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, general supervision and issuance of regulations.

National Old-Age Pension Insurance Fund, administration of old-age pensions and surviving spouse's allowances.

National Sickness Insurance Fund, administration of disability and survivor pensions.

Contributions collected by joint collection agencies.

Sickness and Maternity

First law: 1928.

Current laws: 1945, 1967, 1971, 1974, and 1978.

Type of program: Social insurance system.

Coverage

Employed persons. Pensioners and some groups of nonearners also covered for medical benefits.

Special systems for agricultural, clergy, mining, railroad, public utility, and public employees; seamen; nonagricultural self-employed; and agricultural self-employed (medical benefits provided under general system for some groups). Voluntary affiliation for residents not working in covered employment.

Source of Funds

Insured person: 6.8% of total earnings; old-age pensioners (low-income pensioners exempt), 1.4% of old-age pension and 2.4% of private pension; unemployed, 2% of guaranteed minimum income for unemployed; 1% of unemployment benefits and training allowances. Flat-rate contributions for students, young persons, and others not covered otherwise.

Employer: 12.80% of total payroll.

Government: Proceeds from 12% surcharge on automobile insurance premiums plus proceeds from tax on costs of pharmaceutical advertising, alcohol, and tobacco; also funds for new hospital construction and part of cost for certain health and social services.

Above contributions also finance disability and survivor benefits.

Qualifying Conditions

Cash sickness benefits for the first 6 months and maternity benefits: 200 hours of paid employment in the last 3 months.

Cash sickness benefits beyond 6 months (within a limit of 3 years): 800 hours of paid employment in the last 12 months, including 200 hours in first three months.

Medical benefits: 60 hours paid employment in the last month with contributions paid on wages amounting to at least 60 times the minimum wage, or 120 hours of employment in the last 3 months with contributions on an amount equal to 120 times the minimum wage. Under these conditions, benefits can be paid for 1 year. With 1,200 hours of employment in the course of one year or contributions on an amount equal to 2,030 times the minimum wage, benefits are paid for 2 years.

Sickness and Maternity Benefits

Sickness benefit: 50% of covered earnings. Minimum, 48.06 francs a day (no minimum during first 6 months of benefit). Maximum,

241.16 francs a day; from the 7th month onward 248.05 francs a day. Rising to 66 2/3% after 30 days if 3 or more children.

Minimum: 64.09 francs a day. Maximum: 321.55 francs a day; from the 7th month onward 330.74 francs a day.

Payable after 3-day waiting period for up to 360 days in a 3 year period. For chronic or prolonged illness, 3-year period, calculated separately for each period of illness.

Maternity benefit: 100% of net earnings. Payable for 6 weeks before and 10 weeks after confinement for 1st and 2nd child; for 8 weeks before and 18 weeks after confinement for 3rd child; for 12 weeks before and 22 weeks after confinement if twin pregnancy; for 24 weeks before and 22 weeks after confinement if triple or more pregnancy. Payable for 2 additional weeks in case of maternity hospital care because of pathological condition in connection with pregnancy, except if triple or more pregnancy.

Maximum: 386.87 francs a day (Alsace-Moselle: 378.19 francs.)

Benefits payable in case of adoption correspond to those for post-natal period.

Workers' Medical Benefits

Medical benefits: Cash refunds of part of medical expenses.

Includes general and specialist care, hospitalization, laboratory services, medicines, dental care, maternity care, appliances, and transportation.

Insured normally pays for services, and is reimbursed by local sickness fund. Amount reimbursed depends on the type of service, for example, 70% for medical services, 60% for paramedical services, 80% for hospitalization and 35 to 65% for pharmaceuticals. Insured pays 70 francs a day for hospitalization room and board charges (disabled children, war and work accident victims exempt) in addition to above cost-sharing arrangements. Duration: No limit.

Dependents' Medical Benefits

Medical benefits for dependents: Same as for insured person except for in-kind benefits. Following divorce from or death of insured, medical benefits payable for 1 year or until youngest child's third birthday. Unlimited protection for eligible person who has raised three children or more.

Administrative Organization

Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, general supervision.

National Sickness Insurance Fund, coordination of regional funds and financial equalization; bipartite governing body.

Regional Sickness Insurance Funds, coordination of local funds; bipartite governing bodies.

Primary (local) Sickness Insurance Funds, registration of insured, payment of cash benefits, and refunds of medical expenses; bipartite governing bodies.

Contributions collected by joint collection agencies.

Work Injury

First law: 1898.

Current laws: 1946, 1967, 1972 (agriculture), and 1994.

Type of program: Social insurance system.

Coverage

Employed persons, vocational education students, and certain nonpaid members of social service organizations.
Special systems for agricultural, mining, railroad, public utility, and public employees; seamen; nonagricultural self-employed; and agricultural self-employed.

Source of Funds

Insured person: None.

Employer: Whole cost, through contributions varying with risk.
Average, 2.26% of total payroll.

Government: None.

Qualifying Conditions

Work-injury benefits: No minimum qualifying period.

Temporary Disability Benefits

Temporary disability benefit: During first 28 days, 60% of earnings; maximum, 868.89 francs a day. Thereafter, 80%; maximum, 1,158.52 francs a day.

Payable from day following incapacity for work.

Permanent Disability Benefits

Permanent disability pension: 100% of average earnings during last 12 months, if totally disabled, with minimum and maximum established by formula.

Constant-attendance supplement: 40% of pension; minimum, 68,712.21 francs a year.

Partial disability: Average earnings multiplied by 50%, then multiplied by the degree of incapacity for a disability between 10% and 50%; multiplied by 150%, then multiplied by the degree of incapacity for a disability above 50%.

Lump sum payable if less than 10% incapacity.

Workers' Medical Benefits

Medical benefits: All necessary care, including medical treatment and surgery, hospitalization, medicines, appliances, rehabilitation, and transportation.

Services paid for directly by fund, with no cost sharing by patient.

Survivor Benefits

Survivor pension: 30% of earnings of insured if under age 55, or 50% if age 55 or disabled. Payable to widow or widower.

Orphans: 15% of earnings for each of first 2 children under age 16 (17 if unemployed, 18 if apprentice, 20 if student or disabled), 10% for each additional child; or 20% each if full orphan.

Other dependent relatives: 10% of earnings each, up to maximum of 30%.

Maximum survivor pensions: 85% of earnings of insured.

Funeral grant: Cost of burial up to 7,235 francs.

Administrative Organization

Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, general supervision.

National Sickness Insurance Fund, administration of program at national level.

Primary Sickness Insurance Funds, payment of benefits.

Regional Sickness Insurance Funds, assessment of contributions and implementation of prevention.

Contributions collected by joint collection agencies.

Unemployment

First law: 1905.

Current laws: 1967 (legal extension of 1958 labor-management agreement on unemployment insurance), 1972 (guaranteed income for unemployed aged 60 and over), 1974 (agriculture), and 1984.

Type of program: Social insurance system and solidarity system (social assistance.)

Coverage

Unemployment insurance: Employed persons. Excluded: Public sector workers to whom the same compensation rules are applicable by their employers.

Special systems for building and dock workers, merchant seamen, aviators, domestic workers, seasonal workers, doorkeepers, and disabled personnel in sheltered workshops.

Solidarity program (means-tested): Long-term unemployed having exhausted unemployment insurance, and certain special categories.

Source of Funds

Insured person: 2.21% of monthly earnings.

Employer: 3.97% of payroll.

Government: Whole cost of solidarity program.

Maximum earnings for contribution and benefit purposes: 57,880 francs a month.

Qualifying Conditions

Unemployment benefit: Under age 60 (or between 60 and 65 without enough quarters of coverage to qualify for a full old-age pension) and meets the required employment conditions. Must live in France, be registered at employment office, capable of and available for work. Unemployment not due to voluntary leaving, misconduct, or refusal of suitable job offer.

Solidarity benefit: Long term unemployed and meets certain conditions regarding previous employment. Income tested.

Unemployment Benefits

Unemployment benefit: The initial benefit equals 57.4% of earnings (within the limit of 75% of the daily reference wage), for a period (4-27 months) that varies according to age and length of covered employment. An additional period of reduced benefits may follow which also varies in length according to age and work history. The benefit is reduced every 4 months.

Minimum benefit: 106.14 francs a day. Increased to 133.11 if 52 years or older, unemployed more than a year, with 20 years of employment, with one consecutive or 2 separate years of employment in last 5 years.

Solidarity benefit: From 82.42 to 118.39 francs a day, depending on age, years of coverage, or family situation.

Solidarity allowance: Variable amount renewed every 6 months. Ages 59 years, 6 months and older, with 12 years of earnings, can maintain benefits, up to age 65, until eligible for retirement.

Administrative Organization

Unemployment insurance organizations with bipartite (management-labor) governing bodies, administration of unemployment insurance and payment of unemployment insurance benefits.

Family Allowances

First law: 1932.

Current laws: 1946.

Type of program: Universal system.

Coverage

Family allowances: Families living in France for at least 3 months.

Source of Funds

Insured person: None, except self-employed and farmers.

Employer: 5.4% of payroll.

Government: 1.1% of total revenues used to finance family allowances, as well as a tax of 1% on heritage income.

Qualifying Conditions

Family allowances: At least 2 children under age 20, and earn less than 55% of minimum wage.

Young child allowance: Paid from 5 months of pregnancy until age 3. Income-tested.

Family supplement: 3 or more children over age 3, and earnings below a certain ceiling.

Accommodation allowance: At least one child. Paying rent or monthly mortgage payments. Income-tested.

Single parent allowance (income-tested): Single woman pregnant or caring for children for a limited period.

Family support allowance: Payable, under certain conditions, to parent raising child without the help of the other parent, or to third person caring for the child.

Adoption allowance: Payable for 21 months to family adopting a child. Income-tested.

Parental education allowance: Parent who stops paid work or reduces paid activity to raise 2nd or subsequent child; employed 24 months during last 5 or 10 years preceding birth or adoption. Paid until child reaches age 3.

Home child care allowance: Covers part of social security contributions where employed parents pay for a person to mind their young child at home.

Accredited child care benefit: Children under age 6, if parents are working and pay for child care by an accredited carer. Includes cash benefit and payment of social security contributions.

Special education allowance: Caring for a handicapped child.

Beginning of school year allowance: Children aged between 6 and 18 years old. Income-tested.

Family Allowance Benefits

Family allowances: 684 francs for each of first 2 children; 876 francs for subsequent children. Additional 192 francs for child between 10 and 16; 341 francs for children over 16 (except for the first in a 2-child family).

Young child allowance: 981 francs per family.

Family supplement (income-tested): 890 francs a month.

Accommodation allowance: Variable amount depending on rent level, income and number of children.

Single parent allowance: 3,163 francs per month during pregnancy; 4,217 francs for one child and 1,054 for each additional child.

Family support allowance: 641 francs or 481 francs (child raised by one parent.)

Adoption allowance: 981 francs a month.

Parental education allowance: 3,046 francs (full rate).

Child care benefit for hiring help: 822 francs a month for a child under 3; 411 francs for child aged 3-6.

Special education allowance: 687 francs a month, additional amount from 515 francs to 5,726 francs depending on level of handicap of child.

Beginning of school year allowance: 1,500 francs per child in September 1998.

Administrative Organization

Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, general supervision.

National Family Allowances Fund, coordination of funds and financial equalization; tripartite governing body, composed of representatives of employer, employee, and family organizations.

Local Family Allowances Funds, payment of benefits; tripartite governing body composed of representatives of employer, employee, and family organizations.